

Conversation with 54 year old Native American female, New Mexico (Transcription)

M6 B(2)

FW: Do you remember your first day at school?

INF: Oh very much so I think. Because I see everybody going to school and my <rother?
> was telling me that I wasn't old enough to be in school at that time but I decided since everybody was going to day school, I decided to walk there and I went to school all by myself - my mother didn't take me. So anyway, when the teacher ask me what my name was, I said Marie. Of course my real name was Elvie. So I went to school by myself. And

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so after that, well, I guess I missed school a day or two so the man that was taking of the absentees went to my home and asked my mother well, why isn't Marie in school and my mother said she's not old enough. Yes, her name is right here. Isn't this your little girl. And about that time I must have come out and he said she's the one I'm looking for. So, I went to school.

FW: Did everyone in your class speak English or did they speak Indidan?

INF: Oh, see, I'm married to, well, he's from another Pueblo and we have our own language. He doesn't speak our language. He understands but from the very beginning,

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my family spoke English to make it so that he would feel at home so we spoke English all the time.

FW: Can you remember your first girlfriend? or boyfriend?

INF: My first girlfriend - well, my girlfriend, as I can remember, Mrs. <gap> and I have always been friends from our day school and -

FW: Do you think children have too much freedom these days?

INF: Yes, I think so cause in our days, we had to do chores before anything you know and I think in a lot of ways, they're very open about things now, in looking at children I feel they should teach them at least something at home, you know, but now they have everything just in reach.

FW: What are some important things people should remember when raising their children?

INF: Well, like I learned from books and everything - parents are the first teachers - whatever you teach your children is what they learn - respect-wise I think that they should be taught at home and then as they go

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on to school well, you know a child has been taught manners. So, that's really it.

FW: How important were the older people, the elders, to your growing up?

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INF: Well, very respectful in lot of ways. They worked hard and I give them all the credit. Just about half hour ago, I was <just?> talking about this man, Mr. Gene <Cate?>. I noticed - I feel real bad because I see them going to the post office, to the store and I watched this children here from the school. I don't know what they don't like about him. I don't know what they have against that man. It worries me. I feel one day he's going to have a heart attack because as he's walking they don't respect him and I think people that age should be respected and I just feel I want to go across the school to tell whoever is in charge to please watch the children how they treat this man. That comes at home. That is taught at home. I know that's the way my family has been taught to respect their elders no matter how old you are there's people older than you, and you should respect them.

FW: Do you think the younger generation show respect to the elders around here?

INF: Well, very little, very little. I mean you have to remind them alot of times, in fact, they are to speak to the elders but we are the ones that talk to them and I always tell my children if you meet anyone whether they're related to you or not, <unintelligible text> talk to them because that way you get along with people and I think that's the main thing to do - teach your children to respect their elders. They're very important.

FW: When you were a child, were you ever lost?

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INF: Well, no. I don't know, I guess not. I never really.

FW: Have you ever been in an accident or seen an accident?

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INF: I have been in accident.

FW: Will you tell me about it.

INF: This is going to work in Los Alamos, I have passengers, I had, let's see, five beside me. And we were going on what they call the old road in Santa Clara, very narrow. And we were going not at a high speed either, it was just early in the morning we were going to work, it just so happened that this person that was coming out from the side road just came right in front of us so I had a chance to get away from there but I saw a fence - I was going straight to the fence and then beside the fence there was a tree so avoid hitting the tree, the house, I just really to avoid the house I hit the tree and I stopped. But I had insurance for my passengers so I called the police and reported the accident but I didn't get anything out of it but my passengers got - they took them to the hospital and had them checked so nobody was hurt. My nose was cracked, but that was all. So luckily everybody came out <unintelligible text>. That's the only one that, let's see, I don't remember.

FW: Have you ever seen an accident?

INF: I don't know, let's see.

FW: Or a fire.

INF: Let's see - I don't remember. No I've never really seen any.

FW: Have you ever been back East?

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INF: Let's see. Yes I have.

FW: Where did you go?

INF: When we were small, well, it was -

FW: You used to go to Chicago with Grandpa, didn't you?

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INF: No, I was trying to think of a year, that was 1948 and 49 we went out there for the railroad fair. At that time I had my daughter My daughter was 12 years old. She was eleven and the little boy was 1 and 1/2. And then I was expecting the other one. Your brother the Governor now, was with us and your sister and we met alot of interesting people. Lot of movie stars, <unintelligible text> especially Roy Roger became our best friend out there. We had dinner with him and then we, well, they had railroad queens from different tribes. There were about, oh, let me see, about 25 tribes there, so everybody had a queen. And I was a railroad queen the first year we went out.

FW: Was that the year - my brother said something about the white people having belly buttons?

INF: Oh yeah, that was, let's see, in 1948, he used to - well, he was curious about everything - being small - first time out from the pueblo he see different people and he saw colored people - well <unintelligible text> that rub off on their shirts, you know. I said not that's their color, just like we're brown, well, that's their skin color. oh and then he would

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see people with belly button and he would say you have one too. A lot of things was I guess to him it was different, you know. But I thought that was real cute. Now, you know, he, now you tell him, he laugh.

FW: Did you go to Washington last year?

INF: Yes, I did. We went in August and I was with the food where they serve. <unintelligible text> We made so many fried bread that when I came back, I never want to look at another fried bread. We made fried bread, by oh gosh, I don't know. All kinds of food that we have in the pueblos and I think the white people enjoyed the food we were selling. They asked questions.

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How it's prepared. What it do for you. Well, we tell them it has vitamins too, so - it was really interesting I enjoyed

FW: How long were you gone?

INF: We were gone, Well, let's see. We left August the 2nd. We were back by the 9th and we met you when you came from Philadelphia. Remember you came over to dance. I thought that was real nice. It was so good to see somebody we knew after it took awhile to be away from home. But city life is so rush rush. You know, we visited the White House, the Museum where they have the Indian. <unintelligible text>, Oh we saw so many things. Now, if you see Washington on a picture, you remember what you saw out there. You could just see everything. We visited, The Kennedy's Grave where he had his little girl and little boy and his brother - his brother's grave. I never really thought the eternal flame,

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remember they were talking about, and it's really true. It was still burning. And it'll burn til - It was Very, very nice.

FW: Do you go to any feast day during the summertime?

INF: Oh, yea, well, when I don't have to do any work, I mean anything when I'm not busy, planning things, but sometimes when you plan to go somewhere, something else comes up. Usually near by feast. <unintelligible text> My daughter-in-law is from Cochiti and they're having their feista Thursday, the 14th, so we might go. But, now I'm babysitting and it's going to be hard to take these kids along so maybe we won't go.

FW: What's the biggest feast day that you can remember?

INF: I think San Juan Feast Day. I think San Juan is just something to look forward to and then alot of times, well, you see all your friends here and all my children come home for that day. It's just something special, you know. So I think I prefer San Juan Feast.

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FW: How about for Christmas? What do they do here?

INF: Well, they start the 23rd, they have - they go for their evergreen. And then they have the <unintelligible text> on the 24th eve where you have the and then 26th they have the turtle dance and everybody start getting ready on the 22nd and 21st. Well, they bake bread, getting ready, you know. So, it's really something to look forward to.

FW: Do you dance or anyone in your family?

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INF: Oh, my husband dances every year. He won't miss that one dance. He feels that this is something that he has to do. And it's just in him, that's just his faith.

FW: Have you ever been to California?

INF: Yes, my daughter lives out there, so I visit - this summer she came home for the feast so I didn't have to go. I went just about every other summer. I stay out there for two weeks. Mac don't like to go, because he hates to travel, and then he says, his excuse is always - homes have to be taken care of, you know, things - somebody might break in so that's what he tells me, so I love to travel. I love to travel and I might as well do it now while I'm young and able. Whenever I'm not <unintelligible text> I didn't take the chance.

FW: Do you go to movies?

INF: Oh, not really. Maybe once in awhile if my children come and then they would say something that has to do with Indians. They would tell me Mom you wanna go, so they take us.

FW: Did you see Shadow of the Hawk?

INF: Yes, we did. That's the one they took us to. I thought that was really interesting. They didn't make the Indians too - alot of

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shows I like to see Indian Pictures, Indian people in shows but they make them look so, like if they're not educated, well, now they are but before they aren't and that sorta make you feel - you see pictures of, - but I enjoy good pictures.

FW: Have you ever been to a pow wow?

INF: Yes, we went to a pow wow at the Albuquerque Indian School that was in the Spring. My sister's little girl was dancing and took first place in that Buffalo Dance - that's when we went. And then they had one in, well over here - the Day School, they have Indian Day in the fall we went there. I think it's nice to see your own people doing something.

FW: Did they have a graduation?

INF: Yes, we had a very interesting graduation program this year. We had our program, graduation program, at the new building, they had this auditorium down here and the children had caps and gowns. <unintelligible text> I think your little boy graduated and they did the bow and arrow dance. Our group did the Buffalo and the eagle dance. I thought that was real cute. Very interesting. So alot of them will be transferred to the day school now. I think we have about 17 or 18 children coming to the San Juan Day School now from the Head Start.

FW: Are you usually happy when the kids are dancing?

INF: My little niece, we dressed and just about that time, well I guess we didn't fasten the inside of the shoe lace good so her shoe came off, but it didn't seem funny to the little ones course the audience they were laughing and clapping, but they got together and they went inside and we fix them up, they came out again and start dancing so I thought that

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was real cute that it didn't matter to them whether they were laughing at them or they just went about their dance.

FW: Thank you.

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IN: What's your name?

INF: <unintelligible text>

FW: Are you dancing this weekend?

INF: Yes I am.

FW: What kind of dance is it?

INF: <unintelligible text> What they call the Harvest Dance where they bring all the crops in and they feed mother nature. Everybody that wants to have to take part and dance or either sing. They dance in four places on the south side of the pueblo and by <unintelligible text> place and then on the north side and at the Kiva.

FW: Did you go peon picking?

INF: Yes, we did. We tried yesterday. We were gonna stop in San <unintelligible text> but we thought the gate was locked so we just went on to Bandelier and we stayed awhile

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there and we didn't find any and then we came back down to Whiterock. There wasn't very much there, but they said there was alot in San <unintelligible text> and Santa Clara.

FW: How did you feel about Santa Fe fiesta?

INF: I think it's all right the way they did, I mean if every Indian took part in, you know, not going down that would be all right but I think it was well done though. You know, we have to back of our councilman and everybody that's a spokesman and go along with them as a group cause so the coloreds do that, the whites do that, so why not the Indians - we're just as strong and I think that every Indian should stand behind the all pueblo council. They need our help and this is the time to do it. But I don't know about the girl from San <unintelligible text>. I think she should have done what the all pueblo councilman- the President told her,